

Future Development of Japan – Vietnam Relations

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Introduction

As we look to celebrate the 30th anniversary of friendly relationship between Japan and Vietnam, let us first take a look at some of the past.

Thirty years ago on September 21, 1973, before the end of the Vietnam War, Japan and the then Democratic Republic of Vietnam initiated formal diplomatic relations. The foreign ministry at the time (Ohira Masayoshi, Foreign Minister; Shinsaku Hogan, Administrative Vice Foreign Minister; Sunobe Ryoza, Director-General, Asian Bureau; and Miyake Wasuke, Director, First Southeast Asian Division, Asian Bureau) took the initiative, defying American opposition, and advanced foreign relations independently. The Japanese government at the time recognized so-called South Vietnam (the Republic of Vietnam) as the official government that governed all of Vietnam and even established an embassy in Saigon (currently Ho Chi Minh City). Its enemy, that is, North Vietnam (the Democratic Republic of Vietnam) was a government that, from the viewpoint of Japan, did not exist under international law. Roughly over 1 year and 7 months, Japan had been holding secret negotiations with the North Vietnamese government, culminating in the signing of treaty on September 21, 1973 in Paris.

Director of First Southeast Asia Division, Miyake Wasuke, who headed the negotiations, at that time, was called the “Japanese Kissinger” by journalists. At the time, the person who assisted Miyake was Inoue Kichinosuke.

Why then did Japan push to develop formal diplomatic relations with the North Vietnamese, to the extent of defying American opposition, before the end of the war? Part of this background lies in American President Nixon’s electrifying visit to China in February 1972 and the shock of US – China reconciliation. However, this can only be because as Japan envisioned the state of Southeast Asia after the end of the Vietnam War, it had a profound realization of the importance of North Vietnam. Objectively speaking, this was because politicians and the foreign ministry at the time had set aside ideology and realized that North Vietnam would probably win the war and that a unified Vietnam would be stabilized and prosperous, eventually making significant contributions to the stability and development of the Southeast Asian region. Also, they realized that the growth and stabilization of a unified Vietnam were something good for Japan in both mid-term and long-term prospects. Further, this is because those involved at the time believed that the people of Japan would support such a decision.

When the Vietnam War ended on April 30, 1975, in accordance with the treaty, the Japanese government began to provide Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 1977. Unfortunately, the rise of problems with Cambodia saw a freeze in this support over a 14-year period from 1978 – 1991. Vietnam then became isolated in the international community. However, the ASEAN nations,

Australia, and France as well as Japan continued diplomatic efforts. A resolution to the Cambodian conflict would be found with the involvement of the United Nations. Vietnam's stance during the long period of negotiations for the resolution to this Cambodian conflict was extremely important. Resolution of shifting to "Doi Moi" policies which was passed at the 6th National Meeting of the communist party of Vietnam in December 1986, was decisive. The assistance was resumed in 1992, when it became certain that the resolution to the Cambodia conflict had been found in the form of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia. Today, 11 years later, annual ODA to Vietnam exceeds 100 billion yen, despite the weakening of the Japanese economy and growing tensions over the budget. Since 1995, among countries around the world providing support to the developing countries, Japan provides to Vietnam the greatest amount of support being given to a single country.

Here, I would like to raise the following 5 points the last 30 years. (1) Japan took the initiative and created diplomatic relations, (2) the formation of diplomatic relations with the then Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) was widely supported by the Japanese people, (3) in reality, the relationship was nonexistent over the 14-year period between 1978 – 1991, (4) ODA was restarted after 1992 and every year an enormous amount of support is aiding the development of Vietnam, (5) there has been no change in thoughts regarding the focus on Vietnam and those policies are supported by the people.

1 . Current Japan – Vietnam Relations

The opportunity created by the 1992 resumption of ODA will create a primary Vietnam boom. Hoping to find business chances blossoming from the ODA, various people from major businesses to small and medium-sized business owners traveled to Vietnam. Vietnam itself reached out to Japan saying, "don't miss the bus", and was aggressive in pushing for the development of factories and joint venture companies in Vietnam. The result was the creation of a variety of investment proposals. Vietnamese people are hard working, they have a desire to learn, the country has many high quality people, they are good with their hands, etc. Backed by general goodwill toward Vietnam and respect for the fact that they won the Vietnam War, there were many Japanese businessmen who held high expectations for Vietnam. However, when it actually came to the point of implementing a project, there were many problems, including the lack of established legal regulations, the incomplete state of an industrial infrastructure – water, electricity, roads, airports, housing, etc. – and bureaucracy taking too much time in decision-making, so that many planned projects ended without reaching completion. Even if there was growth in so-called "trade"-- the import of primary goods such as crude oil, shrimp, and dried cuttlefish, and the export of motorcycles, electronics, machinery, and household items--- there were few cases of successful realization of joint ventures or direct investment. It is true that because for the nearly 50 years after the end of World War II the country

had almost completely been ignorant of the reality..

However, during that period many books and essays regarding Vietnam were published in Japan. Television and other media created special programs about Vietnam. Both bright and dark sides of the real Vietnam were beginning to be exposed to many Japanese people. On the other hand, not only were Honda (synonymous with motorcycles), Toyota (synonymous with automobiles), Sony (the king of televisions), and other Japanese manufacturers became commonplace names in Vietnamese homes but also the TV drama series “Oshin” was aired in 1994 and was enormously popular in the country although there were people who felt the series was annoying because it perpetuated misconceptions and an outdated perspective of male – female relationships. It is also true that Vietnam had come to have a great interest not only in Japanese products but in Japanese people and their society. Parallel to this was the fact that a considerable number of books regarding the Japanese economy were translated into Vietnamese during this period.

When the direct route from Kansai Airport to Ho Chi Minh City was established in 1999, this gave rise to the second Vietnam boom. It is safe to say that this boom still continues today. The major factor in this boom is tourists. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of people wanting to travel to Vietnam. And this is often a pair of young Japanese women. Vietnamese clothing, accessories, general goods, and foods are featured in weekly and monthly magazines targeting women, and it is probably the case that the Vietnamese style and delicate nature appeal to the senses of Japanese women. So why is it that the Vietnam travel boom is occurring now? This is because there are very few followers of Islam, so there is no threat of terrorism, and public security is relatively well-maintained. Further reasons include the low cost of living and the fact that the country is nearby. In addition to the above, I propose two more reasons to explain this.

In 1990, a travel agent explained the following episode to me when I was working as a researcher at the Embassy of Japan in Vietnam. “There are 3 conditions that must be met in order to attract Japanese group tourists. First, public transportation must be on time. Second, hotels must be clean and comfortable. Third, the food has to be good. If these 3 requirements are met, then we will be able to invite Japanese tourists in groups to Vietnam.” More than 10 years since the implementation of Doi Moi policies, Vietnam might be finally able to meet the above 3 conditions. Certainly, unless there should be something extraordinary, flights to Vietnam leaving from Kansai and Narita leave on time, and wonderful hotels are being built all over the place. And it is also true that there has been an increase in the number of clean and delicious restaurants.

However, I think there is a greater charm in Vietnam able to attract Japanese, particularly Japanese women. That charm is something that both Japan and Vietnam share: an affinity for things delicate and beautiful. As a presumption made based on my own experiences and personal biases, I think this is in part because gift items, dolls and other ornaments, those that can be purchased at an easily affordable price, made in Vietnam, tend to be made with more care and are cuter than those found in

China, Korea in East Asia and Thailand, Indonesia, Burma in Southeast Asia, and it is highly likely that a friend who received something from Vietnam as a gift would be very happy. In the past, a writer named Kyu Eikan once said that “the Chinese are merchants, the Japanese are craftsmen”. I agree with his opinion but based on that opinion, I am left with the personal opinion that Vietnamese people are in between the Japanese and Chinese; they are both merchants and craftsmen. I get the sense that Japanese and Vietnamese people in some ways have a similar appreciation for the “artisan spirit”. In particular, speaking in terms of Vietnamese cuisine, the food is much less greasy than Chinese food, and the focus of a meal are rice, soup, and vegetables. This type of menu is one that is easy for a Japanese person to appreciate.

Since entering the 21st Century, there has been the establishment of direct air routes between Narita and Hanoi, which has led to a dramatic increase in the number of people traveling between Japan and Vietnam not only for tourism but also for the purposes of work and study. There has been a steady climb in the number of Vietnamese people traveling to Japan, and conversely there has been an increase in the number of Japanese performing on-site activities with NGO in Vietnam. In addition, the dramatic expansion of e-mail has made it possible to exchange e-mail messages between Japan and Vietnam almost without restriction. Thanks to the Internet, information regarding various situations in both societies can be attained in real time. Since 1992, after more than 10 years, the two countries have finally come to be able to understand each other for who they are.

However, the progression of mutual understanding also leads to increased knowledge about each other's differences and darker side of society. To put it not so elegantly, there is the oft-used phrase, “the more you know, the more you don't like what you see”. In order to look directly at differences and dark side head on and cultivate a relationship based on goodwill, clear, unified goals and visions for the future and, more than anything, mutual trust, are incredibly important. Especially in a 21st Century where transportation and communications means have become high tech at amazing rates of speeds, and the economic systems move closer toward globalization that will see the formation of a singular world economic market, holding on to a clear vision and maintaining mutual trust will prove to be the most difficult.

2 . ODA Comprehensive Strategic Council

Present day Japan is in the midst of economic recession that had began with the collapse of the bubble economy and has continued for more than 10 years. This has led the nation to take a sharper look at ODA. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has received much criticism and as a result has begun renovation of the ODA concept and how it is managed. The ODA Comprehensive Strategic Council headed by Foreign Minister Kawaguchi has initiated a reevaluation of the “Vietnam Assistance Plan”, which constitutes the fundamental policies for ODA to Vietnam. This reevaluation is being conducted using an “open network system,” and the opinions of Vietnam researchers like myself also

are sought. The “Final Proposal following the Evaluation of the Vietnam Assistance Plan” will be completed shortly, and it is assumed that it will be made public. I would like to neatly summarize the ideals, goals, future fundamental policy, and “vital sectors” being reviewed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Vietnam ODA Chief thus far (although there is the possibility that the final draft to be released will include the opinions of various people and could change quite a lot). This is because without taking into account the perspective of the government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it will be impossible to propose an attainable and concrete proposal for future Japan – Vietnam relations.

First, I will take a look at Chapter 1 “1. Concepts and Goals”. Although it is somewhat long, this is an important section and thus I would like to reference it. “Vietnam has the second largest population among the ASEAN10. The hard-working and motivated nature of the people provides the country with a significant amount of latent potential for economic development. Vietnam, which shares its borders with China, also is an important country in the context of our nation’s diplomatic relations with China. Further, the stable development of the country, which is thought to be the more advanced among the lesser developed ASEAN countries (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam), serves as a model for other lesser developed ASEAN countries and is seen as balanced development that lies in the middle ground between developed and lesser developed ASEAN countries. For Japan, Vietnam also has meaning as a manufacturing base, a future export market, and an energy supply base. With improvement of the Vietnamese investment and business environments, it is expected that the assistance provided by Japan will lead to a positive growth cycle in terms of Japan – Vietnam and Japan – ASEAN economies. In this way, assistance provided by Japan and the resulting Vietnamese development holds significant meaning for both Japan – Vietnam and Japan – ASEAN relations.”

“At the same time, Vietnam is low-income nation and, though it can be said that rapid growth in recent years has caused considerable improvements in certain social indicators, overall levels of income and standard of living are still low, and particularly in the rural areas there are still many people living in poverty. The assistance provided by Japan, contributing to lifestyle and social aspects of Vietnam’s development, will serve to respond to the country’s humanitarian and social needs, and will prove meaningful from the perspective of having a balanced Japanese ODA system.

Later, in Chapter 2 under the title “2. Conditions related to the development of Vietnam”, explanations are provided for the following categories: (1) Immediate Problems, (2) Overall Summary of Government, Society, and the Economy, (3) Condition of the Economy and Problems, (4) Lifestyle and Societal Conditions and Problems, (5) Economic and Societal Infrastructure.

Chapter 3 “3. Development Strategy Trends”, ‘(2) Analysis and Evaluation of Japanese Assistance to Vietnam’ provides the following general overview.

“Japan fully resumed assistance to Vietnam in 1992 and has been its top donor since 1995. Under the individual nation assistance plans established in 2000, Japan provided assistance to Vietnam with a major focus on the following 5 sectors: (1) human and institutional development (specifically support for transition to a market economy), (2) establishment of electricity and transportation infrastructure, (3) agriculture and farm development, (4) education and health and medicine, (5) environment. Assistance Japan has provided to Vietnam is unique in that while maintaining balance with support made for infrastructure establishment and societal sectors, we also have actively supported policy research, personnel development, and institution building that will support the transition to a market economy. This support has widely contributed to Vietnam's economic growth and lifestyle and societal reforms, including the reduction of poverty.

In Chapter 4 “Vietnam Assistance Fundamental Policy”, the fundamental policy is outlined as follows.

“Japan, (as is written in Chapter 1), supports the development of Vietnam because the countries are in a mutually dependent relationship in the areas of diplomatic relations and economics, as well as humanitarian and societal reasons. Of these fundamental perspectives, the country will support the solid growth of the Vietnamese economy from the standpoint of diplomatic relations and a mutually dependent economic relationship. Specifically, Japan supports the promotion of a transition to a market economy, creation of an investment environment, and the establishment of an infrastructure as a way to promote growth and increased competitiveness. This support, by improving the overall state of the Vietnamese economy and society, will also serve to respond to humanitarian and societal needs. Further, of the above-mentioned fundamental perspectives, from the standpoint of concern about humanitarian and societal issues, Japan supports lifestyle and societal improvement including the reduction of poverty. This serves to address the fact that problems will not be solved by growth alone, and in certain situations problems may be exacerbated, and helps to create the fundamental conditions required for future growth promotion. Japan also supports the creation of a system that will create the foundations for both growth promotion and lifestyle and societal improvements.

“In this way Japan has the understanding that total improvement in economic level resulting from economic growth appropriately combined with direct support in the humanitarian and social sectors is vital to solving humanitarian and social issues.”

With this understanding, the vital sectors of Vietnamese assistance in that chapter (3) are proposed as the following.

“For Japan, the three vital sectors are growth promotion, lifestyle and societal improvement, and institutional development (three cornerstones).

Growth promotion – development of investment environment, promotion of small to medium sized businesses and private sector, development of economic infrastructure (transport,

transportation, electricity, information communications), development of personnel to support growth, reforms of government-run businesses and other reforms in the economic sector

Lifestyle and societal reforms – education, health and medicine, local development, urban development, environment

Institutional development – development of a legal system, administrative reform (reform of civil servant system and financial system)

Following this, the section entitled ‘(4) Comprehensive efforts in major sectors, cross-sector efforts’ reform proposals delve into implementation processes and the process of policy debates. Suggestions are made for Vietnam, each donor, NGO collaborations and mid-term visions shared by Japan and Vietnam, and the formation and adoption of proposals for these purposes that are not based on an “appeal for assistance approach” but that are “interactive are pointed”

3 . Comments on the final proposal

As time is limited, I will refrain from providing my personal detailed opinion to the contents of the “Final Proposal following the Evaluation of the Vietnam Assistance Plan”. However, I would like to take the opportunity to make some comments regarding the fundamental way of thinking.

Perhaps no one may object to the idea of setting the 3 sectors – the sector that will promote economic growth, the sector that will work for lifestyle and societal reform, and the institutional development that forms the basis for both of those sectors – the “3 cornerstones” of development assistance. This not only applies to Vietnam but is a general principle of the latest theory on “Development Economics” that can be applied when providing assistance to any low-income, developing country.

Needless to say, there is a significant possibility that, in the application of these 3 cornerstones, policies meant to promote economic growth will conflict with those meant to promote lifestyle and societal reform. A classic example of this is seen in the construction of dams and expressways. On the one hand, there are those arguing from the macro perspective and saying these projects are necessary to the national economy. On the other hand, there are also those speaking from the micro perspective and opposing the relocation of the residents to protect the lifestyles of the people living in the affected area as well as opposing dam and expressway construction because of the wide-spread environmental destruction such projects cause. Regarding these issues, the previous “appeal for assistance approach” where Japan did not become involved and only responded when Vietnam “requested assistance” is being discarded for an “interactive” approach. Instead, in this new process, not only the Japanese government but also other supporting countries (donors), international support agencies, and NGO’s collaborate from the onset of a proposal and work to resolve an issue through “interaction” with Vietnam. No one would oppose the open and democratic nature of this

process. However, is it possible to realize in Vietnam such a process that will go beyond formalities and have actual substance?

To better clarify the issue I am calling into question, let us try to approach things from a different viewpoint. In other words, the thought process of this “Final Proposal of Reevaluation” applies general principles from the latest theories in “Development Economics” to Vietnam but does not sufficiently take into consideration the current state of Vietnam and the problems with the previous 10 years of assistance that that Vietnam has been receiving from Japan. That is to say, in certain ways this thought process neither thoroughly focuses on Vietnam-specific problems nor gives sufficient scrutiny to the means and methods by which those problems are to be resolved. To put it another way, this thought process lacks an historical perspective while the short-term political perspective is being over-emphasized.

4 . Future Development of Japan – Vietnam Relations

In light of the “Vietnamese Assistance Plan” final proposal of reevaluation created by the Japanese government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a researcher studying Vietnamese history and politics, I would like to offer new 2 ways of thinking regarding the future development of exchange between the people of Japan and Vietnam.

(1) Comparison of similar nations: A more accurate comparison

Japan and Vietnam have had interactions since the 7th Century. The countries have many points in common such as religions including Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism, and aspects of daily life such rice and chopsticks. This is due to a significant influence from the Chinese civilization. Because of this, many past analyses have been derived from frameworks such as the “cultural sphere of Chinese character” or the “cultural sphere of Confucianism”. However, old methods have emphasized the similarities and have not given much focus to the differences.

It has been comparative analysis based on “an external perspective” and not comparative analysis based on “an internal perspective”. In many cases, the European perspective that was the scholarly canon from the 18th century to the 20th century has been, consciously or subconsciously, factored into comparisons and the common attitude was to “compare elements that were foreign from the European standpoint”. As has been stressed by Said, “Orientalism” (the East as seen and defined by the West) has long been dominant in historical and cultural comparisons. However, this is not simply a matter of removing the “Orientalism” perspective from the way this issue is approached. What is required is a new, more accurate method of analysis that answers the question how we perform an “internal” comparative analysis of incredible similar subjects To accomplish this requires a close relationship that creates an awareness of the opposite’s minute differences.

While Vietnam and Japan have many elements in common in terms of their cultural

backgrounds, their historical experiences are incredibly different. If the two countries can come to know each other well, there will be opportunities to notice the minor yet distinct cultural and historical differences and turn into the chance for each country to learn more about itself.

I believe Japan must more actively pursue exchanges with China, South Korea (Republic of Korea), North Korea (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) and other East Asian countries, as well as with Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries, conduct more accurate comparisons, and place making an effort to increase self-awareness as its highest priority. With that in mind, the project entitled "The Creation of Modern Asian Studies" (headed by Professor Mori Kazuko, Waseda University Department of Political Science and Economics) was initiated. In November of last year, this project was designated as a center that, and even on the international level, formulated the highest quality research center (COE, Center of Excellence). I am working as the center's general director.

It is my hope that this way of thinking would be used in future relations between Japan and Vietnam. Unfortunately, despite the fact that geographically Japan and Vietnam are close neighbors, yet historically speaking the countries have not had very much interaction that has been on equal terms. There are too many aspects, societal situations, ways of thinking, customs, and traditions that are unknown to each other. For the sake of mutual understanding, and of self-improvement of both countries, I believe Japan and Vietnam ought to collaborate in the development of a method of conducting a more accurate comparative analysis of these two societies grounded on many similarities. I believe that from such a collaborative project would emerge both mutual trust and mutual respect.

A highly accurate comparison of the various countries and societies in Asia will allow each country to understand the similarities and differences among other Asian societies. This understanding will create an opportunity to present to the globalized world ideas that are derived from each country's unique approach. This surely is the way to protect individual identity in this globalized world, and I am convinced that this would greatly contribute to the global society. To speak in more specific terms, I believe this may provide an answer to the question of how we can assert our own culture and the uniqueness of our views and counteract the American "empire".

The future Japan – Vietnam interactions I envision are not difficult. It is not a question of whom to do that, but a question of perspective. These are not merely narrow exchanges by scholars and researchers. It is possible for ordinary people to interact as well. Take chopsticks, for example. They function differently as knives and forks do. They are used today in Japanese, Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese societies. Our "use of chopsticks" itself is the same, but there are many subtle differences such as material (Japanese mostly use wood, Korean chopsticks are metal, Chinese use plastic (in the past, there were people in the upper classes who used

chopsticks made of ivory), and Vietnamese chopsticks most made of bamboo), length, and the shapes of the tips.

People who share an interest in these subtle differences exchange information and knowledge, and actively pursue the question of how those types of differences came to be. Those enthusiasts or businesspeople then cooperate to disseminate those results to a wide range of people. What is important is that this kind of movement takes place in a variety of fields. This is not something that will occur naturally but requires, as its center organizations, media organizations, government agencies, business, and NGO's. From difficult subjects such as religion and philosophy to areas beyond cultural sectors including technology and trade, the key is the deepening of mutual understanding in vast areas.

European countries have amassed great amounts of knowledge allowing them to have a mutual understanding of each other's society. For example, it is said that "the English people know the French society better than anyone. Even regarding today's French society, French people actually are better able to understand books written by the English than those written by the French." And this is actually happening. This depth of mutual understanding does not exist yet among the countries and societies of Asia. Over the next 50 years or so, I hope to use this "more accurate comparative analyses" project to increase mutual understanding and self-understanding between Japan and Vietnam.

(2) Assistance for the creation of a general intellectual infrastructure

In light of sizes of lands and populations, Japan and Vietnam are not "major nations," like America, China, or Russia. . Though Vietnam is more plentiful than Japan, its deposit resources are not overly abundant. , After all, the driving force of economic, cultural, and societal development is human knowledge and moral quality. What is required today and will be necessary in the future Vietnam is the mass cultivation of human resources that can respond to the intense international competition that has emerged as a result of a globalized world society. The education of a person takes at least from 10 to 20 years. This is not something that can be forced.

On this point, the "Vietnamese Assistance Plan" created by the Japanese government and Ministry of Foreign Affairs includes funding for education, identifying it as a critical area, but I believe this allotted funding is very insufficient. There is also a category for education funding in the "Final Proposal of Reevaluation". However, in reading this carefully, it seemed to me to be too shortsighted.

For example, the following explanation is provided regarding the vital category titled "Development of Human Resources to Support Economic Growth". "Within higher education, focus on areas that have importance and priority in terms of growth promotion, i.e., advanced economy and technology that will support a transition to the market economy and increase

industrial competitiveness, the enhancement of advanced research facilities related to the development of human resources that will relate to Japan, and the support of foreign exchange to Japan.” “While focusing extensively on support related to the development of human resources with advanced management skills, consider support for the development of human resources with an entrepreneurial mentality and those who will contribute to tourism promotion. Further, consider support for broadcasting.”

The following is noted regarding education in ‘2. Lifestyle and Societal Reforms’, which is one of the major points of focus. “While focusing extensively on support for improving the quality of primary education, consider support related to increasing the rate of literacy.” “Consider support for secondary education and education for the disabled.” “Within pre-school education and higher education, areas other than those that have importance and priority in terms of growth promotion and those already listed above will not be the target of extensive support.”

Educational problems are major issues even in developed countries. In this globalized world society of the 21st century, what values and identities will we nurture the youth to have? Every society is struggling to find a way to educate children so that they have the ability to succeed in the world of international competition while maintaining a strong sense of ethics and morality. On top of this, many advanced countries are facing multiple issues such as government deficit, aging societies, and gender issue such as women’s social advancement. More than anything, education cannot stand without vast financial resources, time, and groups of superior educators.

This is why, when considering the distant future of Vietnam, the power of Japan alone is not enough. A collaborated effort that includes Japan, international agencies, donors, and NGO’s must be aggressively undertaken to support the creation of a comprehensive intellectual infrastructure within Vietnam. A special project team from Japan and Vietnam must create a uniform blueprint, from pre-schools to graduate schools, for the creation of consistent organizations of education and research, as well as the cultivation of groups of educators and researchers operating this system. Lastly, perhaps what is most required of Japan today is a view on the development of an intellectual and imaginative education and research infrastructure that approaches the issues with a mid to long-term perspective. A view that, 100 years from now in the 22nd century, will cause the Vietnamese to express their gratitude to Japan by saying, “One of the driving forces of Vietnamese development in the 21st century was the creation by Japan of a uniform comprehensive intellectual infrastructure for Vietnam.”